

more electrical engineers, we don't need any more teachers and nurses and doctors—no, we know better than that. We need them. We need all of them, and their strength makes us a stronger Nation.

So the day will come, and I hope soon, when we will have a chance for those who follow the debate so closely and to those who understood their fate was in the hands of the Senators who voted this morning.

Do not give up. We have not given up yet and you should not give up. We are going to keep pursuing this. We are in a sad and troubling moment in American history when the issue of immigration is so divisive. But let's be honest, it has always been divisive. There have always been people saying: No more immigrants, please, in this nation of immigrants.

Immigrants have to play by the rules. They have to follow the law. I understand that. But let's not turn our back on our heritage as a nation. The strength of America is its diversity. The fact that we come from the four corners of the world to call this place home, the fact that our parents and grandparents had the courage to pick up and move, rather than to be content with a life of mediocre opportunity—those are the people who made America, those are the ones who defined who we are. It is why we are special in this world, if we are, and I think we are.

We cannot let these young people go. We cannot afford to let them go. For those several of the Senators today who stuck their necks out a mile, a political mile to cast this vote, I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and these DREAM Act kids thank you too. The American dream will be there some day, and we will keep working until it happens.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, last week marked the 5-year anniversary of President Bush's signing the Congressional resolution that authorized him to use military force in Iraq. That resolution has proved to be a disaster for our country, opening the door to a war that has undermined our top national security priority, the fight against al-Qaida and its affiliates.

More than 5 years after the authorization of war, America is mired in a conflict that continues to have no end in sight. Nearly 4,000 of our soldiers have died and more than 27,000 have been wounded. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians have been killed, if

not more, and at least 4.5 million have been displaced from their homes. The region is more unstable, and our credibility throughout the international community has been significantly damaged.

We have spent over a half trillion dollars and stretched our military to the breaking point. Who knows how many more billions will be spent and how many brave Americans will die while the President pursues a military solution to problems that can only be solved by a political settlement in Iraq.

At the same time, al-Qaida has reconstituted itself along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region and has developed new affiliates around the globe. Al-Qaida has been strengthened, not weakened, since we authorized military action against, and then want to war in, Iraq.

Indeed, this senseless war has made us more vulnerable, not more secure. Yet it continues endlessly with only a small token drawdown of forces expected in the coming months, and no timeline from this administration as to when more troops will come home.

The American people know this war does not make sense. They expect us to do everything in our power to end it. Now that does not mean neglecting domestic priorities, and there are plenty of those to address, but it does mean we cannot, in good conscience, simply put Iraq on the back burner. We cannot simply tell ourselves and our constituents we have done everything we could. Finding the votes to end this war is not an easy task, but for the sake of the country, we must keep trying. I, for one, am not prepared to say, in late October, with weeks to go before we adjourn for the year, that Iraq can wait until we come back in 2008. Believe me, the administration and its supporters would like nothing better than to change the subject from Iraq. Every time we insist on debates and votes on Iraq, they complain loudly that we are taking time away from the country's true priorities. But as we were reminded last November, however, ending the disastrous Iraq war is one of the American people's top priorities. It may well be their top priority, and we owe it to them to make it our top priority as well.

While the administration continues to refuse to acknowledge that we have severely strayed off course, the war drags on and on, and more brave American soldiers are being wounded or killed. But it is not only the President and his administration that is at fault; many of my colleagues here in Congress have expressed concerns about the war but refuse to take real action to end it. They have prevented Congress from acting to secure our country and restore our global leadership.

I will not stand idly by while this mistaken war continues. I will continue working to end this war and bring our troops home. I will continue looking in the days and weeks ahead for opportunities to debate and vote on

ending the war, this year, and, if necessary, next as well.

My colleagues may complain, they may be inconvenienced, they may prefer to focus on other matters. But this Congress has no greater priority than making right the mistake it made more than 5 years ago when it authorized this misguided war.

I do not want to have to come to the floor again in a year to mark another anniversary of the war's authorization, and to again implore my colleagues to act. I do not want the American people to lose faith in their elected leaders for pursuing a war they rightly oppose. I do not want more American troops to be killed for a war that does not serve our national security interests.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in morning business.

ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this country is headed toward a total meltdown on taxes. I am going to spend a few minutes this afternoon to talk about how that can be cooled off for a bit.

Yesterday, Treasury Secretary Paulson warned that unless the Congress acts within the next month on the alternative minimum tax, up to 50 million households, more than a third of all taxpayers, could be clobbered with new taxes. Congress has known for some time that unless the alternative minimum tax is addressed, 23 million taxpayers would be hit with the double whammy of having to calculate their taxes twice, and typically pay a higher tax bill.

First, they are going to have to do their taxes using the regular 1040 form; then they will have to calculate their taxes using the alternative minimum tax, which has a completely different and more complex set of forms.

Having to do your taxes once is bad enough. On average, that takes something like 15 to 30 hours, depending on whether a taxpayer is itemizing. But having to do your taxes is simply bureaucratic water torture.

Yesterday's announcement by Treasury Secretary Paulson revealed that twice as many taxpayers as previously estimated could be put in bureaucratic limbo by the alternative minimum tax and face delays in processing their returns and getting a tax refund. The problem is going to get worse and worse each year, as more and more taxpaying Americans are dragged into the alternative minimum tax parallel universe of tax rules, because the tax law is now stuck in a time warp.

It was never indexed for inflation. If Congress does not act, an estimated 30 million taxpaying Americans are going to be hit by the alternative minimum tax double whammy in 2010.